Flying Saucer Reports Refuse to Die Out

By Ed Creagh
Associated Press Staff Writer

NEW YORK, April 1.—Those flying saucers!

Is it possible that some of them may be real, after all?

Or—not well that this is the season of All Fools' Day — are some people "seeing things in the dark" while others are up to the well-loved American pastime of telling tall stores?

Editor's note: People in many places and many lands report they've been seeing things in the sky that look like flying saucers. The Air Force, having investigated 375 such reports over a two-year period, insist it's all due to "misinterpretation of conventional objects." The current crop of flying saucer reports is reviewed in the accompanying story.

One thing is sure:

Myth or military secret, optical illusion or "invasion" from Mars, the so-called flying saucer is getting plenty of attention — more serious attention, probably, than at any time since it whirled into the news nearly three years ago.

The armed forces, meanwhile, continue to dismiss the whole subject of flying saucers as so much moonshine.

More Reports Made.

What brings the flying saucer back into the headlines?

1—More people of late have reported more strange objects in the skies. Some of these turn out to be quite ordinary things such as weather balloons. Others go unexplained. And people who report the unexplained objects give detailed, highly colored descriptions.

2—There are hints—no more than hints— of a secret weapon that looks like a flying saucer. An Italian scientist says such a weapon could easily be made. Despite official denials, a Texas Radio Commentator Henry J. Taylor says he's convinced the United States is making it. But to repeat: there's no evidence whatever to back up this talk.

3—Some practical jokers have been spreading flying-saucer stories. Many people show themselves ready—even eager—to believe these stories, however fantastic. Even the exploded yarn about a space ship from Venus, with "little men" aboard, finds widespread belief.

The Air Force set up a flying-saucer investigation at Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio. Over a two-year period it made about 375 investigations. Last December it made its report: There's nothing whatever to flying saucers that can't be explained by "misinterpretation of various conventional objects, a mild form of mass hysteria or hoaxes."

Italian Authority's View.

An Italian authority on weapons, Giuseppe Belluzo, said in Rome that both Italy and Germany designed types of flying discs as early as 1942.

"The truth is that these instruments of destruction can be built and operated," said Mr. Belluzo, a cabinet minister under Mussolini. "The principle of the flying disc is very simple and construction with light metal very easy.

"Some great power is now launching discs to study them."

And, on the other hand, there is the strange case of the mysterious objects in the sky over Farmington, N. Mex.

Hundreds of people saw them last St. Patrick's Day. Some counted 20, others more than 100. One witness said they loafed along at about 15,000 feet, and added:

"They were perfect reproductions of a dinner plate, even to the bottom ring."

Pieces of Cotton.

But State Patrolman Andy Andrews turned in the final report:

"They looked as though they were 'way high. Then after a while I could see they were really only about 40 feet off the ground. I watched three of the things float down onto the garage. They were just cotton—pieces about the size of a quarter."

Then there's the classic story that spread throughout the West. Maybe you heard it:

The Government (this is pure fiction, remember) has two flying saucers at a radar station near the Arizona-New Mexico Border. One is badly damaged and the other is in almost perfect condition.

Actually (this is still fiction) the saucers are space ships—from Venus—six feet wide, encompassed by rings 18 feet across and two feet thick. They are equipped with tripod ball-bearing type landing gears. In the air the rings whirl around the stationary cabins, giving the ships a gyroscope effect.

Two Little Men Aboard.

Each ship (hold on to your hat, now) contained two little men. The bodies in the damaged ship were too charred to tell much about them. The other two bodies were well preserved. The men were three feet tall, blond, beardless and with perfect teeth.

They were built much like human beings on earth except for size. They wore clothes of a blue, wiry material and their trousers were skin-tight. They wore no underwear but the bodies were taped.

Well, a Denver engineer named George Coulter made up the story some three months ago. He told it, as a practical joke, to a visiting Kansas City auto dealer named Rudy Fick.

Back in Kansas City, Mr. Fick passed the story on to some friends. It spread like wildfire. In Mexico, Ray L. Dimmick, a powder company executive, heard it—people even showed him a strip of metal which they said came from one of the space ships.

Story Is Retold.

Mr. Dimmick went back to Los Angeles and told the story. It got into the papers. It was denied. Mr. Coulter, who made it up in the first place, plainly described it as a gag. Still the story circulates. And people almost always are disappointed when they learn it isn't true.

But what of the saucer stories that are not denied?

Take the one told by Capt. Jack Adams and First Officer G. W. Anderson of Chicago & Southern airlines. They were over Stuttgort, Ark., at night less than two weeks ago when they saw what they describe as "a bright blinking light that was approaching us from the south."

As Capt. Adams tells the story: "We watched it for 20 or 30 seconds. As it drew nearer to us and crossed our path, we saw on the under side of the object a circular group of lights arranged in a manner that gave it the appearance of a definite circle.

"The lights were bluish or fluorescent in nature and the object appeared to be about 100 feet in diameter.

"The way it was flying, I'm positive it was a definite and controlled flight. It maintained a constant altitude and constant course and traveled at a terrific rate of speed."

Capt. Anderson said: "Neither Jack nor I have ever seen anything that approached this. It's nothing like jet or anything else we've ever heard of other than the flying saucer itself."

The airmen told their story, on a television program, to Mrs. Franklin R. Roosevelt. She shook her head in laughing bewilderment.

"I will say I've been a little skeptical before," she said. "I thought people were seeing things."

Had Measuring Devices.

Another account of an aerial what-is-it comes from Charles B. Moore, jr., of Minneapolis, an engineer and director of the General Mills high altitude balloon propject.

Mr. Moore had scientific measuring devices with him when he and four Navy men sighted the object from a point 57 miles northwest of the White Sands, N. Mex., Proving Ground.

Based on their calculations, the object was elliptical in shape, about 105 feet across, and flying about 56 miles high at a speed of about four miles per second.

Mr. Moore's report led Navy Comdr. Robert B. McLaughlin to write in True Magazine:

"I am convinced that it was a flying saucer and, further, that these discs are space ships from another planet, operated by animate, intelligent beings."

Mr. Moore himself said recently he sees no reason to believe it either a flying saucer or space ship.

Stories Multiply.

"It was no hallucination, however, and I believe objects like this are worth much further investigation," he said.

So the stories multiply. On a single day recently, more or less similar reports—none confirmed, none proved false—came from Erie and Clearfield, Pa.; Havana, Cuba; Dallas, Tex., and Mexico City.

In Washington, I. R. Tannehill, chief of the Weather Bureau's division of reports and forecasts, says this can be expected to happen often.

"We're putting a lot of that stuff in the air and it drifts around. Anybody could see one of those things and think he'd had too much to drink, or get the idea he was seeing two moons or a flying saucer," he said.

Stars Will Launch Cancer Fund Drive

Actress Mary Beth Hughes and her crooner husband, David Street, will perform together at the opening rally of the 1950 cancer fund campaign in Constitution Hall at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday.

Their act is one of a dozen by stage, screen, radio and television stars that will help launch the District cancer drive during April.

Others on the program include Jeff Clark of the "Hit Parade," Martha Scott, Lanny Ross, Nancy Carroll, Helmut Dantine, Molly McNeil, Hal Le Roy, Faye Emerson, Dean Murphy and Mary Curtis.

Masters of ceremony will be Danton Walker and Igor Cassini. The Navy School of Music Band will play in front of Constitution Hall as the audience arrives. An orchestra will be supplied by the D. C. Federation of Musicians, Local 161.

Dr. Charles Cameron, director of science and research for the American Cancer Society, will discuss the need for research. Other speakers will be Walter S. Pratt, jr., president of the District Division of the American Cancer Society ;Royal Garff, professor of speech of the University of Utah, and Lloyd Carey, father of an 8-year-old boy who died of cancer.

The District's quota is $200,000.

Mary Beth Hughes. David Street.

Doak Walker Crowns Azalea Festival Queen

By the Associated Press

WILMINGTON, N. C., April 1.—Doak Walker, S. M. U. football star, tonight crowned Gregg Sherwood, movie starlet, as queen of the Wilmington Azalea Festival.

The All-America back put a rhinestone crown on the platinum blond tresses of Miss Sherwood, "Miss North Carolina" of 1943.

Walker took the crown on a handoff from Charlie Justice, University of North Carolina All-America back, and did the honors during a festival ball.

Earlier in the day the third annual festival reached a high spot with a street parade viewed by an estimated 90,000.

Symphony Will Give Final Neighborhood Concert Tomorrow

The final Neighborhood Concert of the season will be presented at 9 p.m. tomorrow at Wilson High School under auspices of The Evening Star.

Conductor Howard Mitchell will lead the National Symphony Orchestra in an hour-long program of music by four composers.

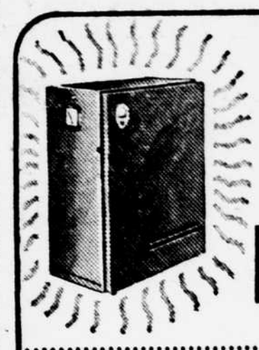
Rienzi Overture, Wagner.

Dream Pantomime from "Hansel and Gretel," Humperdinck.

Bacchanale from "Samson and Delilah," Saint-Saens.

Andante Cantabile and Finale from Symphony No. 5, Tchaikovsky.

Admission to the concert is free. It will be broadcast over The Star's stations, WMAL and WMAL-FM.



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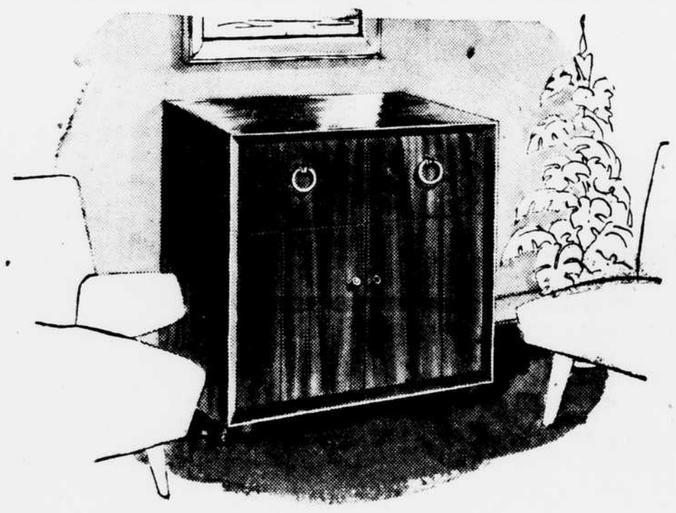

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